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accomplished with a cleverness of art worthy of all admiration, an admiration which those will best know how to render who have ever set themselves to the task of turning one of the biographer's paragraphs into genuine English.

Half the volume is occupied with the notes. These are scholarly, and never pedantic. All that the average non-professional reader can fairly ask for by way of explanation is generously offered. The strength of the annotation goes toward establishment of the historical background, toward measuring the departure of story from history and tracing the motives of the departure. Skepticism has full hearing; not always, we fear, Plutarch. Whatever is left standing can at any rate be safely regarded as history, and furthermore it must be said that though Plutarch is continually denied credence, it is done in so kindly and withal so charitable a spirit that the genial old Bœotian would scarcely take it amiss himself. Investigators in the field of modern history are likely to find these friendly little encounters between Plutarch and Perrin the most interesting and instructive portions of the volume.

The introductory essay on "Plutarch the Biographer" is a model for its kind both as to matter and to style. It is the most readable, and I believe also the sanest estimate of the great biographer and his works that exists. The separate essays on "The Themistocles" and "The Aristides" are valuable as containing the clearest available summary of the sources of these writings and of the method of their use. The essay on "Biography before Plutarch" might well have lain in fermentation somewhat longer.

BENJAMIN IDE WHEELER.

Justinien et la Civilisation Byzantine au VI^e Siècle. Par CHARLES DIEHL. (Paris: Ernest Leroux. 1901. Pp. xl, 692.)

THIS volume belongs to a class of encyclopædic works which is attractive and useful to the historical student. While it can hardly claim to be an original contribution to our knowledge, it yet brings together into an available form the most important materials which belong to the period under consideration. Special students in art, law and religion might desire more exhaustive discussions in their respective fields of inquiry. But it is difficult to imagine how a more comprehensive and scholarly survey of the whole range of Byzantine culture could be given in a single volume. The work is one of a series entitled *Monuments de l'Art Byzantin*, published under the direction of the Minister of Public Instruction and Fine Arts. The author is familiar with the subject of which he treats. For fifteen years he has been an assiduous student of this and allied topics, and he has in that time published a number of volumes in the archæological field. The results of his special studies are conspicuous in the pages before us, which may be regarded as an epitome and culmination of his previous labors.

The present work shows the author to be not only a critical observer of historical facts, but a broad historical scholar who has thoroughly

mastered the literature of his subject. The period covered by the reign of Justinian is prolific in sources of information ; and the author has prefaced his work with a comprehensive survey of these sources, Greek, Latin and Oriental, juridical and diplomatic, literary and monumental. The careful examination of original authorities and the unstinted use of the extensive material brought within his reach, indicate an unusual capacity for research. The work is a thesaurus of facts. It is clear and systematic in its arrangement, and evinces a good sense of historical perspective and proportion. The author divides his subject into three books. The first book deals with the personnel of the government, including a description of the Emperor Justinian, the Empress Theodora, the palace and the court ; the second book, with the work of Justinian, including the government and administration of the empire ; the third book, with the Byzantine civilization of the sixth century, as shown in the great cities of the empire, especially in Constantinople, Athens, Antioch, Rome and Ravenna. M. Diehl recognizes the difficulty of forming an impartial judgment regarding the character of Justinian, especially as the most distinguished historian of the time, Procopius, has given us such contradictory views as those contained in the *Edifices* and in the *Secret History*, the one describing the Emperor as superior to Themistocles in the success of his arms and to Cyrus in the wisdom of his administration, while the other represents him as comparable only to Domitian, a *mélange* of feebleness, of corruption, of dissimulation and of cruelty. The true estimate of Justinian, according to M. Diehl, can be formed only by reading Procopius by the side of the less distinguished and less prejudiced historians, Agathius, Evagrius and John of Ephesus, and above all by studying the deeds of the Emperor himself. The military, administrative, religious and diplomatic work of Justinian is reviewed in these pages with great appreciation, not to say admiration. The least satisfactory chapter is that which treats of the legislation of the Emperor. While the successive steps in the codification of the law are described with some degree of fullness, the author hardly seems to have a full appreciation of the historical significance of the *Corpus Juris* itself.

The third book, reviewing the Byzantine civilization of the sixth century, is remarkably well-conceived and well-written. The city of Constantinople, the center of eastern culture, with its intellectual and political agitations, its hippodrome, its church of St. Sophia, its variegated phases of religious life, its commercial activity—the city of Athens, with its survivals of paganism—the city of Antioch, with its riches, its grandeur and its rags—the city of Rome, with its new ecclesiastical imperialism—the city of Ravenna, with its reflections of Byzantine art—are all presented to the reader with picturesque vividness, as well as conscientious regard for truth and accuracy. In addition to a luminous literary style M. Diehl has given us a fine example of the art of illustration. His pages are profusely set with well-selected gravures of coins, medallions, mosaics, busts, plaques, architectural exteriors, interiors and details, plans, columns, pilasters, capitals, panels, reliefs and other illus-

trative materials. Considering its many excellencies, its breadth of view, its scholarly treatment, its accumulation of facts, its systematic arrangement, its lucid style, this latest work of M. Diehl must be regarded as one of exceptional merit, and a valuable aid to the student of this period.

WILLIAM C. MOREY.

Select Documents of English Constitutional History. Edited by GEORGE BURTON ADAMS and H. MORSE STEPHENS. (New York: The Macmillan Co. 1901. Pp. xviii, 555.)

FOR many years Stubbs's *Select Charters* has had no rival as a useful medium for bringing students in contact with the sources of medieval English history; but the fact that this book comprises mainly Latin documents has prevented its wide use in colleges and universities. During the past decade various attempts have been made to replace it with "reprints," "source-books" and "select documents," in the form of translations of the originals covering the whole ground of English history. There is danger of over-production in this field of activity. Some teachers who lack the requisite equipment have been tempted to undertake a kind of work which, if well done, requires a high standard of judgment and an expert knowledge of the sources. No historical task is more difficult than the accurate translation of medieval texts, for the meanings of many words cannot be found in Du Cange or other glossaries, but are learned only by long experience in using medieval Latin. Moreover, a good selection of extracts from the sources of English history, medieval and modern, presupposes a wide knowledge of those sources, which can be adequately acquired only after many years of hard study. Finally, the proper use of a good book of this kind in the class-room demands skill and learning on the part of the teacher.

In view of all these difficulties we are glad to welcome a collection of *Select Documents* edited by two of our most experienced university professors. Within the periods covered, from the Norman Conquest to 1885, the editors have aimed especially to illustrate constitutional and legal history; and therefore they give few extracts from the chroniclers or narrative sources. The chief fault that may be found with the scope of the work is that it begins with the reign of William the Conqueror. Though the best authorities are now inclined to accept the view that the Norman Conquest marks a "red line" of separation between what precedes and what follows, a full course of English history should include some study of the Anglo-Saxon period; therefore a few pages of extracts from the Anglo-Saxon sources would add much to the value of this book. Perhaps, too, a little space might advantageously have been found for material illustrating local government under the Plantagenet kings.

Professor Adams is responsible for the editing of the documents up to 1485, and his share of the undertaking was particularly difficult, because most of his material had to be translated. Many of the translations he has made himself; some he has borrowed from other books. The result is that the same Latin word or phrase is sometimes rendered dif-